

Adopted: May 17, 2022

**ACADEMIC SENATE
of
CALIFORNIA POLYTECHNIC STATE UNIVERSITY
San Luis Obispo, CA**

AS-942-22

RESOLUTION TO ESTABLISH SEMESTER TERMS

- 1 WHEREAS, the California State University Chancellor’s Office has directed Cal Poly to
2 convert from quarters to semesters beginning in fall 2026; and,
3
- 4 WHEREAS, a rationale given by the Chancellor’s Office for converting from quarters to
5 semesters is to align Cal Poly’s academic calendar with the other campuses in
6 the Cal State University System; and,
7
- 8 WHEREAS, the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) states that “[t]he work year of an
9 academic year employee shall not exceed one hundred eighty (180) workdays or
10 days in lieu thereof. This provision shall not preclude the establishment of an
11 academic year calendar equaling less than one hundred eighty (180) days. The
12 campus academic calendar shall establish workdays of academic year
13 employees” (20.4); and,
14
- 15 WHEREAS, Cal Poly’s Campus Administrative Policies (CAP) states that “[t]he typical
16 academic year shall consist of 147 instructional days. From year-to-year a
17 variation of plus or minus two days is permissible. There shall be a minimum of
18 170 academic workdays in the academic year. There shall be a maximum of 180
19 academic workdays in the academic year” (CAP 211.1); and
20
- 21 WHEREAS, 13 of the 23 California State University campuses offer a winter and/or May
22 intersession period for student to maintain progress to degree; therefore be it
23
- 24 RESOLVED: that the Academic Senate approve the attached “Establishment of Semester
25 Terms.”

Proposed by: Academic Senate Ad Hoc Semester
Conversion Committee
Date: April 19, 2022

Academic Senate Ad Hoc Quarter to Semester Committee Establishment of Semester Terms

Executive Summary

The university shall establish an academic calendar that includes:

- 16-week (instruction + finals) fall and spring semesters
- summer term that offers variable length sessions
- winter intersession period for instruction
- two 7.5-week modules in both the fall and spring semesters

The Academic Senate

- shall designate appropriate collaborative committees to establish additional guidelines regarding the winter intersession period and modules
- strongly recommends that winter intersession courses and summer sessions be offered through state-side support to ensure equitable access for all students

Part 1: Semester Term Lengths

Background

The quarter-to-semester conversion process requires the alteration of the academic term length at Cal Poly beginning in fall 2026. Academic terms are governed by existing policies regarding the number of instructional days during the academic year and the number of workdays required by faculty members during the academic year. According to the 2022-24 Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA), “The work year of an academic year employee shall not exceed one hundred eighty (180) workdays or days in lieu thereof. This provision shall not preclude the establishment of an academic year calendar equaling less than one hundred eighty (180) days. The campus academic calendar shall establish workdays of academic year employees” (20.4). According to the Campus Administrative Policies (CAP), “The typical academic year shall consist of 147 instructional days. From year-to-year a variation of plus or minus two days is permissible. There shall be a minimum of 170 academic workdays in the academic year. There shall be a maximum of 180 academic workdays in the academic year” (CAP 211.1). Currently, the academic year is divided into three quarters (Fall, Winter, Spring). The summer session is not considered part of the academic year. Every year, the academic calendar proposals are reviewed by various stakeholders across campus, including department chairs and heads, deans, members of Student Affairs, the Academic Senate Instruction Committee, and the Academic Senate Executive Committee, and the President determines the academic calendar. Across the California State System, each campus establishes its own start and end date for academic terms, including the length of the final examination period (see Table 1).

Table 1: California State University Campus Calendar, 2021-2022

(modified from https://csuip.calstate.edu/customtags/ct_FileRetrieve.cfm?File_ID=90133)

2021-2022 CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY CAMPUS CALENDAR													ACADEMIC AFFAIRS ACADEMIC PROGRAMS AND POLICY	
(Prepared for the information and use of new and prospective students, their counselors, and other interested persons.)														
SEMESTER CALENDAR	Intercession	Classes Begin	Thanksgiving Break	Fall Exams	Instructional Days	Weeks	Winter Break	Spring New Student Registration	Classes Begin	Spring Break	Final Exams	Instructional Days	Weeks	
Bakersfield	No	08/23	11/25-11/26	12/08-12/14	73	14.6	12/20-01/19	11/08-01/14	01/24	04/11-04/15	05/16-05/20	74	14.8	
Channel Islands	No	08/23	11/25-11/26	12/06-12/11	71	14.2	12/24-01/19	11/14-02/01	01/24	03/14-03/20	05/14-05/20	74	14.8	
Chico	Yes	08/23	11/22-11/26	12/13-12/17	73	14.6	12/23-01/18	10/25-12/10	01/24	03/14-03/18	05/16-05/20	74	14.8	
Dominguez Hills	Yes	08/23	11/25-11/26	12/04-12/10	72	14.4	12/24-01/17	10/18-01/23	01/24	03/28-04/02	05/14-05/20	74	14.8	
East Bay	Yes	08/18	11/22-11/26	12/06-12/11	71	14.2	12/20-01/14	02/14-03/25	01/18	03/28-04/01	05/09-05/14	73	14.6	
Fresno	Yes	08/23	11/24-11/26	12/13-12/16	75	15	12/23-01/17	12/06-01/06	01/20	04/11-04/15	05/16-05/19	76	15.2	
Fullerton	Yes	08/23	11/23-11/27	12/13-12/17	73	14.6	12/25-01/02	11/01-11/19	01/24	03/28-04/01	05/16-05/20	74	14.8	
Humboldt	No	08/23	11/25-11/26	12/13-12/17	73	14.6	12/22-01/17	01/12-01/24	01/18	03/14-03/19	05/09-05/13	73	14.6	
Long Beach	Yes	08/23	11/25-11/26	12/13-12/18	76	15.2	12/24-01/19	11/29-02/11	01/20	03/28-04/01	05/09-05/14	74	14.8	
Los Angeles	Yes	08/23	11/25-11/26	12/13-12/18	76	15.2	12/15-01/02	02/10-02/28	01/24	03/28-04/01	05/16-05/21	74	14.8	
Maritime Academy	No	09/07	11/25-11/26	12/18-12/21	71	14.2	12/23-01/02		01/10		04/30-05/04	78	15.6	
Monterey Bay	Yes	08/23	11/25-11/26	12/13-12/17	76	15.2		10/25-01/24	01/24	03/28-04/01	05/16-05/19	74	14.8	
Northridge	No	08/30	11/25-11/26	12/14-12/20	71	14.2		01/05-01/30	01/24	03/21-03/25	05/14-05/20	74	14.8	
Pomona	Yes	08/19	11/25-11/26	12/06-12/10	73	14.6	12/27-01/03	01/06-01/07	01/24	03/28-04/01	05/16-05/20	74	14.8	
Sacramento	No	08/30	11/25-11/26	12/11-12/17	71	14.2	01/04-01/18	11/22-12/15	01/24	03/21-03/25	05/14-05/20	74	14.8	
San Bernardino	No	08/23	11/25-11/26	12/06-12/10	71	14.2	12/17-01/20	11/01-02/18	01/24	03/28-04/01	05/16-05/20	74	14.8	
San Diego	Yes	08/23	11/25-11/26	12/10-12/16	75	15	01/04-01/17		01/19	03/28-04/01	05/06-05/12	71	14.2	
San Francisco	Yes	08/23	11/22-11/26	12/11-12/17	73	14.6	01/07-01/22	12/13-01/21	01/24	03/21-03/25	05/14-05/20	74	14.8	
San Jose	Yes	08/19	11/25-11/26	12/08-12/14	75	15	12/25-01/23	10/26-01/23	01/26	03/28-04/01	05/18-05/24	73	14.6	
San Marcos	No	08/30	11/25-11/26	12/13-12/18	71	14.2	12/23-01/18	12/13-12/17	01/24	03/21-03/25	05/14-05/19	74	14.8	
Sonoma	Yes	08/18	11/24-11/26	12/06-12/10	73	14.6	12/20-01/19	11/15-02/04	01/24	03/21-03/25	05/16-05/20	74	14.8	
Stanislaus	Yes	08/23	11/22-11/26	12/13-12/17	73	14.6	12/23-01/02	11/15-02/12	01/28	03/28-04/01	05/19-05/25	73	14.6	

OTHER CALENDARS	Fall New Student Registration	Classes Begin	Thanksgiving Break	Fall Exams	Fall Break	Winter New Student Registration	Classes Begin	Final Exams	Spring Break	Spring New Student Registration	Classes Begin	Final Exams	
San Luis Obispo	05/18-09/24	09/20	11/22-11/26	12/06-12/10	12/15-01/02	F 49/ W 48 / S 48	11/02-01/12	01/03	03/14-03/18	03/22-03/27	02/17-04/07	03/28	06/06-06/10

Establishment of Semester Term Length

To comply with the Chancellor’s Office requirement that Cal Poly convert from quarters to semesters beginning in 2026, **the university shall establish an academic calendar that includes a 16-week fall semester (15 weeks of instruction and a 1-week final examination period) and a 16-week spring semester (15 weeks of instruction and a 1-week final examination period).** The total number of instructional days and total academic workdays shall follow the requirements of the CBA and CAP.

To increase student access to classes and maintain progress to degree, **the summer term shall continue to offer variable length sessions.** Because of calendar limitations, a sixteen-week term is not possible in the summer. The Academic Senate strongly recommends that the summer session be offered through state-side support to ensure equitable access for all students. The Academic Senate shall designate an appropriate committee (or committees) to collaborate with the Office of the Registrar and other campus stakeholders across the university to establish additional guidelines regarding summer session.

Part 2: Intercession Terms

Background

As part of the Graduate Initiative 2025 (GI 2025), the California State University has prioritized student access to classes, graduation rates, and student success.¹ Cal Poly has consistently made progress toward the GI 2025 targets for 4- and 6- year First-Time Student and 2- and 4-year Transfer Student graduation rates and in eliminating graduate gaps (see Tables 2 and 3).

¹ See Graduation Initiative Advisory Committee Report, available at <https://www.calstate.edu/csu-system/why-the-csu-matters/graduation-initiative-2025/Documents/csu-gi2025-advisory-committee-report.pdf>.

To provide increased student access to classes and maintain student progress to degree, 13 of the 23 California State University campuses offer a winter and/or May intersession periods.

Table 2: Cal Poly Graduation Rates 2018-2021

	2018	2019	2020	2021	CSU ESTABLISHED 2025 TARGET
First-Time Student 4-year	52.5%	57%	59.6%	60.7%	71%
First-Time Student 6-year	81.7%	82%	83.1%	85.2%	92%
Transfer Student 2-year	35.3%	36.1%	37%	37.4%	45%
Transfer Student 4-year	90.1%	85.1%	87.3%	84.8%	93%

Table 3: Cal Poly Gap Data 2018-2021

	2018	2019	2020	2021	CSU ESTABLISHED TARGET
Underrepresented Minority 6-year Gap	9.4%	7.9%	7.4%	5.6%	No Gap
Pell Grant Recipient 6-year Gap	7.7%	5.7%	6.4%	5.0%	No Gap

Establishment of an Intersession Period

To increase student access to classes, maintain student progress to degree, and facilitate Cal Poly’s progress toward the CSU’s GI 2025 targets, **the university shall establish an academic calendar that includes a winter intersession period for instruction that maintains a reasonable alignment with the spring semester start and end dates of other campuses in the California State University system.** Intersession courses shall follow the credit hour requirements established by the WASC Senior College and University Commission’s “Credit Hour Policy” and the Academic Senate “Resolution on Review of Courses with Condensed Time Schedules” (AS-838-17) (see Background Information).

The Academic Senate shall designate an appropriate committee (or committees) to collaborate with the Office of the Registrar and other campus stakeholders across the university to establish additional guidelines regarding the winter intersession period. The Academic Senate strongly recommends that winter intersession courses be offered through state-side support to ensure equitable access for all students.

Part 3: Establishment of Modules

Background

Several polytechnic universities on the semester system offer modules during within the semester terms to achieve their academic goals. Rochester Institute of Technology offers 7-week online sessions every semester (see <https://www.rit.edu/calendar>). Worcester Polytechnic Institute offers 7-week sessions across 5 different terms (<https://go2.wpi.edu/wpi->

[online-term-start-dates](#)). A prominent non-polytechnic university, Arizona State University, offers two 7.5-week sessions, both online and in-person, every semester (<https://students.asu.edu/academic-calendar>). As Cal Poly converts from quarters to semester, modules within the semester provide the opportunity to advance the university's mission as a comprehensive polytechnic university.

Establishment of Modules within Semester Terms

The university shall establish an academic calendar that includes two 7.5-week modules in the fall semester and two 7.5-week modules in the spring semester. Courses offered through modules shall follow the credit hour requirements established by the WASC Senior College and University Commission's "Credit Hour Policy" and the Academic Senate "Resolution on Review of Courses with Condensed Time Schedules" (AS-838-17) (see Background Information).

The Academic Senate shall designate an appropriate committee (or committees) to collaborate with the Office of the Registrar and other campus stakeholders across the university to establish additional guidelines regarding modules.

Part 4: Background Information



Credit Hour Policy

Academic credit has provided the basis to measure the amount of engaged learning time expected of a student enrolled in traditional classroom settings, laboratories, studios, internships, independent studies, and distance education programs. Credit hours are a commonly accepted means of measuring student engagement for multiple purposes, including the transfer of students from one institution to another and the award of financial aid. While this credit hour policy is intended to provide guidance to institutions and peer reviewers with expectations for compliance, the Commission is open to innovative ways to measure student learning and academic engagement.

Definition of Credit Hour

The Commission defines credit hour as an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutionally established equivalency that

1. Approximates not less than:
 - a. One hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit, or 10 to 12 weeks for one quarter hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time; or
 - b. At least an equivalent amount of work as required in paragraph 1.a. of this definition for other academic activities as established by the institution including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours; and
2. Permits an institution, in determining the amount of work associated with a credit hour, to take into account a variety of delivery methods, measurements of student work, academic calendars, disciplines and degree levels. Institutions have the flexibility to award a greater number of credits for courses that they can show require more student work.

Review of an Institution's Credit Hour Policy and Procedures

Commission peer review teams will evaluate, as part of all seeking accreditation and comprehensive reviews for reaffirmation of accreditation, the extent to which institutions meet the Commission's definition of a credit hour, by examining:

1. The adoption of a policy on credit hour for all courses and programs at the institution.
2. The processes the institution employs to review periodically the application of its policy on credit hour across the institution to assure that credit hour assignments are accurate, reliable, and consistently applied.
3. Any variations in the assignment of credit hours to assure that they conform to commonly accepted practices in higher education.

In implementing this policy, teams will use the [Credit Hour and Program Length Form](#) to review institutional documentation:

- The institution's policy on credit hour including expectations at each degree level;
- An explanation of the institution's process for periodic review of the application of this policy;
- Evidence of the implementation of institutional review processes to assure the reliability and accuracy of credit hour assignments in all courses and programs; for example, as part of program review, process for new course approval, or periodic audits; and
- Evidence that the institution's assignment of credit hours conforms to commonly accepted practice in higher education, through sampling a variety of course syllabi based on degree level, academic discipline, delivery modes, and types of academic activities.

In addition, the substantive change committee process includes a review of credit hour assignments and validation of an institution's credit hour policy. Additional protocols for implementation of this policy may be developed to assist institutions and teams in conducting reviews under this policy.

*Approved by the Commission, November
2011 Revised, November 2020*

Adopted: June 6, 2017

**ACADEMIC SENATE
Of
CALIFORNIA POLYTECHNIC STATE UNIVERSITY
San Luis Obispo, CA**

AS-838-17

**RESOLUTION ON
REVIEW OF COURSES WITH CONDENSED TIME SCHEDULES**

- 1 WHEREAS, Courses are being re-packaged in new and interesting ways, including
2 international studies classes, during time periods outside of the
3 traditional ten-week quarter, or as summer experiences; and
4
- 5 WHEREAS, No Academic Senate Curriculum Committee review is currently
6 required for these types of course offerings except for when the
7 courses are originally proposed; and
8
- 9 WHEREAS, Coded Memorandum AA-2011-14 from the Chancellor's Office defines
10 a credit hour as "the amount of work represented in intended learning
11 outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an
12 institutionally established equivalency that reasonably approximates
13 not less than: one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a
14 minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for
15 approximately fifteen weeks for one semester or trimester hour of
16 credit, or ten to twelve weeks for one quarter hour of credit, or the
17 equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time"; and
18
- 19 WHEREAS, A one-unit course during a quarter translates to approximately 30
20 total hours of student work; and
21
- 22 WHEREAS, It may prove difficult to attain the approved Course Learning
23 Objectives if students are expected to work more than 10 hours in any
24 given day; therefore be it
25
- 26 RESOLVED: That any existing course or group of courses that in its new condensed
27 format averages less than three days per unit must be approved by
28 the appropriate College Curriculum Committee(s) and the Academic
29 Senate Curriculum Committee at least 60 days before they are offered.

Proposed by: Academic Senate Curriculum
Committee

Date: May 3, 2017

MEMORANDUM

Cal Poly | Office of the President



To: Dustin Stegner
Chair, Academic Senate

Date: July 17, 2017

From: Jeffrey D. Armstrong
President

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey D. Armstrong", is written over the printed name.

Copies: K. Enz Finken
M. Pedersen
B. Tietje
C. Moore
C. Sunata
G. Bohr

Subject: Response to Academic Senate Resolution AS-838-17
Resolution on Review of Courses with Condensed Time Schedules

This memo acknowledges receipt of the above-entitled Academic Senate resolution. I understand from the resolve clause that resolution AS-838-17, as approved by the Academic Senate, only applies to existing courses that have not yet been offered in a condensed format, averaging less than three days per unit. I expect that the Academic Senate, Academic Programs and Planning, and the Office of the Registrar will work together to resolve any processual issues related to the proposed curricular review.

RECEIVED

AUG - 1 2017

ACADEMIC SENATE

Phone: 805-756-6000 | presidentsoffice@calpoly.edu



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

MEMORANDUM

To: Thomas Gutierrez
Chair, Academic Senate

Date: August 24, 2022

From: Jeffrey D. Armstrong
President

Copies: Rachel Fernflores
Amy Fleischer
Damon Fleming
Bruno Giberti
Cynthia Jackson-Elmoore
Aaron Keen
Dustin Stegner
Cem Sunata
Christine Theodoropoulos
Andy Thulin
Dean Wendt
Philip Williams

Jeffrey D. Armstrong

Subject: Response to AS-942-22 Resolution to Establish Semester Terms

By way of this memo, I accept the 15-week semester proposed by the above-entitled Academic Senate resolution with the following caveat:

As we move toward our first few years on semesters, it is important that we leave open the possibility of year-round operations, consistent with [CAP 211](#). Consequently, we may need to make adjustments to our semester calendar in the ensuing years to accommodate year-round operations. In addition, implementing terms of varied length, within a standard semester term, is something that should be done strategically and intentionally. Furthermore, should Cal Poly institute varied-length terms in a semester framework, it is something that would need to be phased in over time, after careful consideration of the impact of such on graduation rates and on the availability of corresponding resources to ensure student success.

I am confident that, in the spirit of shared governance, we will continue to work together to ensure a successful conversion to a semester calendar. I am also confident that we have the collective creativity necessary to ultimately work toward year-round operations.